

## Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 AID-01 NSC-06 PM-03 /028 W

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R 070652Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6568

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 5192

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MU, OREP (VAN DUSEN, MICHAEL)

SUBJ: STAFFDEL VAN DUSEN VISIT TO KUWAIT

REF: (A) STATE 249897, (B) STATE 251471.

1. STAFFDEL VAN DUSEN NOV 3-5 VISIT TO KUWAIT INCLUDED SEVERAL EMBASSY BRIEFINGS AND LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS WITH AMBASSADOR AND COUNTRY TEAM; CHIEF, USLOK; FMS PROJECT OFFICERS (A-4S AND IHAWK); MICOM PROJECT MANAGER (HERE ON VISIT), AND RAYTHEON REP. STAFFDEL ALSO CALLED ON UNDERSECRETARIES IN DEFENSE AND OIL MINISTRIES AND EXCHANGED IMPRESSIONS WITH KUWAITI MILITARY OFFICERS AND ALSO BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICERS AT VARIOUS SOCIAL FUNCTIONS.

2. STAFFDEL SEEMED MOST INTERESTED IN THREE AREAS: A) U.S. POLICY JUSTIFICATION FOR MILITARY SALES IN KUWAIT; B) KUWAITI CAPACITY TO ABSORB U.S. MILITARY SALES; AND C) USG SLIP UPS AND DELAYS ON FMS SALES IN THE PAST. ON POLITICAL SIDE, STAFF DEL EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN KUWAITI MEASURES TO TIGHTEN SECURITY, AND SOME SPECIAL CONCERN RE DISSOLUTION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND ENFORCEMENT OF PRESS RESTRICTIONS.

3. REGARDING POLICY JUSTIFICATION, EMBASSY'S IMPRESSION WAS THAT STAFFDEL CAME TO SEE MORE CLEARLY NEED FOR SALES TO KUWAIT AFTER GAINING APPRECIATION OF THREAT FROM IRAQ (AT LEAST AS SEEN BY GOK) AND AFTER EMBASSY OFFICERS POINTED OUT THAT SUCH SALES CONTRIBUTE TO OUR GENERAL POLICY OF EXPANDING U.S. INFLUENCE IN THIS IMPORTANT AREA IN THE INTEREST OF ACHIEVING U.S. OBJECTIVES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. KUWAITI ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY SEEMED TO BOTHER STAFFDEL MOST, HOWEVER. THEY REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED CONCERN TO EMBOFFS AND TO GOK

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OFFICIALS OVER LACK OF MANPOWER TO HANDLE PROPERLY INFLUX OF MIL-

ITARY IMPORTS, DIFFICULTY OF RECRUITING MANPOWER IN COMPETITION WITH PRIVATE INDUSTRY, ETC. MOD UNDER SECRETARY'S ASSURANCES TO STAFFDEL THAT MANPOWER PROBLEMS WOULD WORK THEMSELVES OUT WERE NOT CONVINCING, NOR WAS EMBASSY ABLE TO BE OPTIMISTIC ON OVERALL PROBLEM OF ABSORPTION. REGARDING PAST DELAYS AND SLIP-UPS ON USG SIDE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF FMS CASES, AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFF EXPLAINED AT LENGTH THAT AS RESULT OF CONCENTRATED EFFORT, FMS PROGRAM WAS MOVING MORE SMOOTHLY AND FURTHER STEPS IN THIS DIRECTION (I.E. DEMAND THAT GOK HIRE FREIGHT FORWARDER, NEGOTIATIONS FOR EXPANSION OF USLOK, INSISTENCE THAT FMS CASES BE "PACKAGED" BEFORE PRESENTATION TO GOK, ETC.) WERE BEING VIGOROUSLY PURSUED.

4. ON DEPARTURE, VAN DUSEN SAID THAT HE CONSIDERED TIME IN KUWAIT WELL SPENT AND NOTED THAT STAFFDEL'S BASIC OBJECTIVES WERE ACHIEVED. VAN DUSEN DID NOT EXPRESS INTEREST IN CLEARING EMBASSY REPORTING ON STAFFDEL VISIT, SO THIS MESSAGE CAN BE CONSIDERED FINAL AND OUTSIDE SCOPE OF REF. IN ANY EVENT, EMBASSY DOES NOT READ REF B AS APPLYING TO STAFFDEL, BUT ONLY TO CODEL, VISITS.  
MAESTRONE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY ASSISTANCE, VISITS, MILITARY POLICIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 NOV 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976KUWAIT05192  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760415-0523  
**From:** KUWAIT  
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**Line Count:** 82  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION H  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 STATE 249897, 76 STATE 251471  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ElyME  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16 JUN 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <13 OCT 2004 by ElyME>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** STAFFDEL VAN DUSEN VISIT TO KUWAIT  
**TAGS:** PFOR, OREP, MASS, MU, (VAN DUSEN, MICHAEL)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006